

Message Text

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ACTION CU-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15
HA-05 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-01 EB-08 OES-07
/074 W

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FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO USIA WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 3186

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 KUALA LUMPUR 2597

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: REVISED BILATERAL COMMUNICATION ESSAY

REF: (A) USIA 4347, (B) KUALALUMPUR 2043, (C) USIA 7863

FOLLOWING IS THE REVISED TEXT OF BILATERAL COMMUNICATION
RELATIONSHIP ESSAY. TEXT HAS BEEN APPROVED BY AMBASSADOR.
BEGIN TEXT: 1. AS A RESULT OF ITS COLONIAL HISTORY,
MALAYSIA IS STEEEPED IN THE BRITISH TRADITION, BOTH IN
TERMS OF ITS POLITICAL PROCESSES, ITS EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM,
ITS COMMERCIAL PATTERNS, AND ITS JUDICIARY. ELEMENTS OF
THIS RELATIONSHIP REMAIN, BUT THERE ARE INCREASING
EVIDENCES THAT MALAYSIA IS MOVING AWAY FROM ITS TRADITIONAL
TIES TOWARD A MORE NON-ALIGNED POSTURE WHICH PUTS IT IN
CLOSER TOUCH WITH OTHER CENTERS OF INFLUENCE INCLUDING
THE MUSLIM WORLD. SINCE MALAYSIAN INDEPENDENCE IN
1957, WASHINGTON AND KUALA LUMPUR HAVE MAINTAINED AN
INCREASINGLY CORDIAL BUTNOT INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP.
MALAYSIA LOOKS TO GREAT BRITAIN AND THE COMMONWEALTH

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FOR MILITARY ASSISTANCE. ADDITIONALLY, MALAYSIA IS
A MEMBER OF THE ISLAMIC BLOC, THE "GROUP OF 77", AND
SEAN AND ITS ROLE IN THESE GROUPINGS HAS BEEN THAT OF
A MODERATE. POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DIVISIONS ALONG
ETHNIC LINES CONSTITUTE A CONTINUING PROBLEM WITHIN
THE SOCIETY. AMONG MANY MALAYSIANS, THERE IS NO
OVERWHELMING CURIOSITY ABOUT AMERICAN VALUES AND

INSTITUTIONS ALTHOUGH AS COMMUNICATIONS IN AN INTER-DEPENDENT WORLD BECOME CLOSER, HIS GAP OF INTEREST IS NARROWING.

2. MALAYSIA AMONG ITS ELITES IS STILL ENGLISH SPEAKING. BUT THE GOVERNMENT'S EDUCATION POLICY REQUIRES THAT BY 1986 ALL INSTRUCTION THROUGH UNIVERSITY IS TO BE IN THE MALAY LANGUAGE. THE PERCENTAGE OF CHINESE AND INDIANS ALLOWED INTO MALAYSIAN UNIVERSITIES IS FAR BELOW THEIR REPRESENTATION IN MALAYSIAN SOCIETY, FORCING MOST WHO WISH HIGHER EDUCATION TO GO ABROAD, BUT AS ENGLISH TEACHING STANDARDS FALL WITH THE NEW LANGUAGE POLICY, MANY NON-MALAYS FEAR THEY WILL FAIL TO GAIN ADMISSION ABROAD AS WELL. PROBLEMS OF MUTUAL ACCREDITATION, AND THE PROHIBITION OF OPEN DISCUSSION OF THE LANGUAGE POLICY COULD HAMPER THE CURRENT LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGES AND CONTRIBUTE TO DISILLUSIONMENT AND ALIENATION OF NON-MALAY YOUTH.

MALAYSIA HAS PRESERVED A DEMOCRATIC FORM OF GOVERNMENT AND BASIC CIVIL RIGHTS. DEVIATIONS FROM THE LATTER FALL ALMOST ENTIRELY IN THE REALM OF NATIONAL SECURITY AS A RESULT OF A NAGGING COMMUNIST INSURGENCY, NOW ON A DOWNTURN AS A RESULT OF GOVERNMENT COUNTERMEASURES.

3. THE TOP LEADERSHIP OF THE GOM IS CONSIDERED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HIGHLY PRAGMATIC AND MODERATE. MALAYSIA WITH ITS ABUNDANCE OF NATURAL RESOURCES (RUBBER, TIN, PALM OIL, HARDWOODS AMONG OTHER) LAYS PREDOMINANT STRESS ON ITS ECONOMIC TIES WITH OTHER COUNTRIES OF WHICH THE U.S. AND JAPAN ARE IN THE FOREFRONT. THE U.S. IS MALAYSIA'S SECOND LARGEST MARKET AS WELL AS ITS SECOND LARGEST SUPPLIER. U.S. PRIVATE INVESTMENT IN MALAYSIA TOTALS NEARLY \$700 MILLION. BUT, BOTH FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC INVESTORS MUST COMPLY WITH THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY GUIDELINES WHICH INTEND THAT BY 1990 CORPORATE WEALTH SHOULD BE HELD 30 O/O BY MALAYS, 40 O/O NON-MALAYS, 30 O/O FOREIGN. ALSO BY 1990 EMPLOYMENT THROUGHOUT THE ECONOMY MUST BE PROPORTIONAL TO POPULATION (ROUGHLY 50 O/O MALAY, 40 O/O CHINESE, 10 O/O INDIAN) 60 O/O OF CORPORATE WEALTH IS NOW HELD BY FOREIGNERS AND ROUGHLY 50 O/O OF MANAGEMENT POSITIONS NOW HAVE CHINESE INCUMBENTS. EFFORTS TO BENEFIT THE POORER MALAYS SQUEEZE FOREIGN AND NON-MALAY INVESTORS AND ARE A SOURCE OF COMMUNICATIONS TENSIONS. WE ARE THE WORLD'S LARGEST CONSUMER OF TIN AND RUBBER AND MALAYSIA IS THE WORLD'S LEADING PRODUCER OF THESE COMMODITIES, AS WELL AS OF PALM OIL. THEREFORE, MALAYSIA IS PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE TO ANY U.S. ACTIONS (SUCH AS IMPORT

TARIFFS), STOCKPILE DISPOSALS). WHICH WOULD HAVE NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON THE EXPORT OF THEIR PRIMARY COMMODITIES. CONTINUING AND CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE IN THIS AREA IS OBVIOUSLY A HIGH PRIORITY FOR THE MISSION AND ICA.

4. CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGES, BOTH OFFICIAL AND PRIVATE, BETWEEN MALAYSIA AND THE UNITED STATES ARE BECOMING INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT IN OUR DIALOGUE. DESPITE THE PROBLEM OF NON-RECOGNITION OF AMERICAN DEGREES BY SOME INSTITUTIONS, 3-4,000 MALAYSIANS ARE NOW STUDYING IN THE UNITED STATES. AS 35,000 MALAYSIANS ARE STUDYING ABROAD, WE SEE AN OPPORTUNITY TO ENLARGE THE CIRCLE OF THOSE ABLE TO SERVE AS INFLUENTIAL INTERPRETERS BETWEEN THE U.S. AND MALAYSIA BY PROGRAMS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ENCOURAGING MORE YOUNG, QUALIFIED PEOPLE TO STUDY IN THE U.S. THE STUDENT COUNSELING SERVICES OF THE MALAYSIAN-AMERICAN COMMISSION ON EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE ARE RAPIDLY EXPANDING TO MEET THIS PRIORITY. THE RAPID EXPANSION OF THE NEWLY FORMED AMERICAN UNIVERSITY ALUMNI OF MALAYSIA (AUAM) (WITH POST SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT) FURTHER INCREASES OUR ABILITY TO RELATE TO THESE STUDENTS UPON THEIR RETURN.

5. IN TERMS OF FOREIGN POLICY, IT IS CLEAR THAT MALAYSIA WANTS THE U.S. TO CONTINUE TO PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA TO COUNTER-BALANCE OTHER MAJOR POWERS. WHILE U.S. RELATIONS WITH ASEAN ARE OF PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE, ESPECIALLY IN ECONOMIC TERMS, EVOLVING AMERICAN RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE PRC, JAPAN, AND INDIA-CHINA ARE VIEWED BY MANY MALAYSIANS AS AN IMPORTANT KEY TO MAINTENANCE OF STRATEGIC BALANCE IN THE AREA, ALTHOUGH THE FORMER IMAGE IN SOME CIRCLES OF "UNCLE SAM" AS AN "INSTANT PROTECTOR" NO LONGER PREVAILS.

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6. OUR COMMUNICATIONS WITH MALAYSIA, THEREFORE, MUST BE HIGHLY SELECTIVE IN TERMS OF THESE ISSUES WHICH WE FEEL ARE VITAL TO OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP AND ONES WHICH WE FEEL CAN BE TREATED IN SUCH A WAY AS TO COMMAND A REASONABLE HEARING BY AND RESPONSE FROM MALAYSIAN OPINION MOULDERS. THE ISSUES WHICH ICA CAN EFFECTIVELY ADDRESS ARE AS FOLLOWS:
(A) AS A COMMODITY PRODUCER AND A DEVELOPING COUNTRY, MALAYSIA HAS OFTEN DIFFERED WITH THE U.S. ON ECONOMIC ISSUES SUCH AS THE COMMON FUND, NORTH SOUTH DIALOGUE, COMMODITY BUFFER STOCKS AND THE ROLE OF THE FOREIGN INVESTOR. IN CONTRAST, MALAYSIA'S REPUTATION AS A MODERATE IN MANY OF THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC FORUMS INDICATES A WILLINGNESS TO LOOK AT THE OTHER SIDE OF MANY ISSUES. WE SHOULD MAKE U.S. POSITIONS AVAILABLE FOR CONSIDERATION THROUGH BOTH BROAD DIALOGUE WITH MALAYSIAN PRINCIPALS AND MEDIA PLACEMENT.

(B) THE MALAYSIAN LEADERSHIP HAS SOME DOUBTS AS TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AMERICAN WILLINGNESS AND ABILITY TO PLAY A CONTINUING POSITIVE ROLE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. THEY ALSO HAVE A NEUTRALISM WHICH ARGUES FOR A HIGHLY SOPHISTICATED, SUBTLE EXPLANATION OF OUR INTENTIONS AND CAPABILITIES WHICH COULD NOT BE CONSIDERED TO BE A THREAT IN ANY WAY TO THEIR INDEPENDENCE OR THIRD WORLD CREDENTIALS. MALAYSIA HAS BEEN AN EMPHATIC AND CONSISTENT ADVOCATE OF THE ASEAN CONCEPT OF A STRONG, ECONOMICALLY-ORIENTED COMMUNITY OF NATIONS SEEKING NOT ONLY A VIABLE SYSTEM OF ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS WITH ITS NEIGHBORS BUT ALSO SEEKING TO DEVELOP FRIENDLY AND PRAGMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE COMMUNIST NATIONS OF INDO-CHINA. ESTABLISHING THE FACT THAT ASEAN IS IN NO WAY A MILITARY BLOC, PARTICULARLY ONE RELATED TO THE UNITED STATES,

HAS BEEN A KEYNOTE OF THAT POLICY. MALAYSIA, TOGETHER WITH ITS OTHER ASEAN PARTNERS, EXPECTS THE UNITED STATES TO PLAY A MAJOR ECONOMIC ROLE IN ASEAN DEVELOPMENT, A LARGER ROLE, PERHAPS, THAN THE U.S. IS PREPARED RELATIVISTICALLY TO ASSUME.

(C) MALAYSIA BECAUSE OF ITS GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION AND SIZE, ASIAN IDENTITY AND COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES FACES UNIQUE CHALLENGES TO ITS PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS. SHE TAKES CRITICISM FROM STRONGLY NATIONALISTIC QUARTERS FOR BEING TOO OPEN, FROM HER ETHNIC MINORITIES FOR BEING TOO CLOSED, AND FROM SOME FOR HER STRONG REPOSE TO ITS LINGERING COMMUNIST INSURGENCY. PROXIMITY TO INDOCHINA HAS MADE MALAYSIA THE CHIEF COUNTRY OF FIRST ASYLUM OF "BOAT-CASE" REFUGEES. MALAYSIA DOGGEDLY ADHERES TO RULE BY LAW AND ENDURES ASSAULTS ON HER MOTIVES FOR SECURITY LAWS WHICH ALLOW INDEFINITE DETENTION WITHOUT TRIAL. WE CAN AND WILL DO MORE TO PRESENT THE U.S. POSITION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE LIGHT OF ITS ORIGIN WHICH PREDATES UN RESOLUTIONS AND GOES BACK TO OUR OWN MULTI-ETHNIC, AND DELIBERATE NATIONAL ORIGIN, TO REMIND THAT THE COMMITMENT OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AND OUR PEOPLE TO HUMAN RIGHTS IS NEITHER NOVEL, FACILE, NOR VINDICTIVE, BUT REFLECTS A POSITIVE IDEA AMERICANS BELIEVE TO BE A UNIVERSAL DESIRE AND RIGHT OF ALL PEOPLE, AND THAT WE HOLD THAT DEMOCRATIC SOCIETIES ARE THE STRONGER FOR THEIR SAFEGUARDING OF THE INDIVIDUAL'S INTEGRITY AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION.

(D) LESS THAN 11 O/O OF MALAYSIANS STUDYING ABROAD ARE IN THE U.S. SINCE SO MANY (35,000) ARE ABROAD UNDER THEIR OWN FINANCING, THIS INDICATES AN OPPORTUNITY TO SUBSTANTIALLY EXPAND THE CIRCLE OF THOSE ABLE TO SERVE AS INFLUENTIAL INTERPRETERS BETWEEN THE U.S. AND MALAYSIA. THE MAJOR OBSTACLES TO EXPANSION ARE MALAYSIAN ACCREDITATION POLICIES WHICH SHOULD BE DEALT WITH BY DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS AND IV GRANTS, AND THE RELATIVE LACK OF INFORMATION GENERALLY AVAILABLE ABOUT U.S. EDUCATION.

(E) CONTROL OF ILLEGAL NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING AND DRUG REHABILITATION IS AN AREA OF MUTUAL CONCERN WHICH HAS SIGNIFICANTLY EXPANDED IN RECENT MONTHS AND HAVE BECOME THE FOCUS FOR INCREASED U.S.-MALAYSIA COOPERATION AND COORDINATION. ICA CLEARLY HAS A MODEST ROLE TO PLAY IN ASSISTING THE MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT IN A LARGE SCALE PUBLIC EDUCATION EFFORT, BOTH THROUGH THE MEDIA,

SECNDARY SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES, AND THROUGH PUBLIC
AND PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS.

7. THE QUESTION WHICH REMAINS IS HOW USIS KUALA
LUMPUR COMMUNICATES WITH ITS MALAYSIAN AUDIENCES IN
TERMS OF DEMONSTRATING AMERICAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN
THE FIELDS OF ARTS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE
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ROLE OF U.S. SOCIETY. OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN THESE AREAS
AND THEIR RELEVANCY TO MALAYSIA STAND LARGELY BY
THEMSELVES AND ARE BROUGHT HOME TO MALAYSIAN AUDIENCE
DAILY THROUGH THE MASS MEDIA AND THEREFORE REQUIRE
RELATIVELY LITTLE DIRECT ATTENTION FROM ICA. OUR FOCUS
ON THIS AREA, THEREFORE, WHILE NOT REQUIRING A HIGH
PRIORITY EFFORT, SHOULD INCLUDE A MODEST MIX OF THE
CULTURAL ARTS WHEN SUPERIOR TALENT IS AVAILABE
AND OCCASIONAL SPEAKERS IN SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL
FIELDS WHEN THE SUBJECT MATTER IS CLEARLY RELEVANT TO
MALAYSIAN INTERESTS AND CONCERNS. FORTUNATELY, THE
CLIMATE FOR COMMUNICATING IN MALAYSIA IS EXCELLENT;
IT BECOMES, THEREFORE, MORE A MATTER OF HOW AND WHY.
END TEXT.

8. NOTE: POST HAS ELIMINATED LAW OF THE SEA (ITEM
6 IN REFTEL) AS NOT BEING AN AREA OF TENSION WHCIH POST
COULD EFFECTIVELY ADDRESS.XDNHAGEN

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Message Attributes

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